

SENSITIVE

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SITUATION(S) MESSAGE(S) LISTING

DATE 06/20/74//171

SITUATION: CAN TRIP
 SUBJECT CATEGORY: TOHAK

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

MESSAGE:

IMMEDIATE
 DD TE41
 DE WTE #3947 1682153
 D 172153Z JUN 74
 FM THE SITUATION ROOM//TOHAK 001//
 TO PETER RODMAN FOR SEC. KISSINGER/86970/
 ZEN
 UNCLAS WH41987

TOHAK 001

TOPRES006

JUNE 17, 1974

TO: LES JANKA WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL PARTY
 INFO: PETER RODMAN WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER
 FROM: KATHLEEN TQDIA

FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT FROM SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S PRESS
 CONFERENCE AT 1100 A.M. TODAY (JUNE 17, 1974). LEW THOMPSON
 WANTED THIS PASSED ON IMMEDIATELY FOR YOUR INFORMATION. FULL
 TEXT TO FOLLOW WHEN AVAILABLE.

BEGIN TEXT:

Q: MR. SECRETARY, A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO WE HAD SECRETARY KISSINGER
 TELLING US PRETTY CLEARLY THAT THE CHANCES FOR A SALT AGREEMENT
 ON OFFENSIVE WEAPONS WAS ALMOST OUT OF THE QUESTION. WE'VE
 HAD A SERIES OF REPORTS OUT OF NEGOTIATORS THE SOVIETS ARE
 HOLDING VERY TOUGH FOR A SIMPLE EXTENSION OF THE INTERIM
 AGREEMENT. NOW, HERE A FEW WEEKS BEFORE THE PRESIDENT GOES TO
 THE SOVIET UNION WE'RE TALKING ABOUT CHANCES OF AN AGREEMENT IN

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PRINCIPLE IN A VERY SIGNIFICANT AREA OF MIRV TECHNOLOGY.
HOW CAN YOU ASSURE US THAT THIS IS NOT IMPEACHMENT POLITICS --
THE PRESIDENT DESPERATELY TRYING TO GET SOMETHING OUT OF SAIT
SO AS TO STRENGTHEN HIS HAND HERE IN CONGRESS AND WITH THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE?

A: I DON'T THINK THAT THE KIND OF ACTIONS THAT YOU DESCRIBE
WOULD INDEED STRENGTHEN HIS HAND. I WOULD GO BACK TO WHAT I
SAID EARLIER ABOUT THE PRESIDENT, THAT IN MY JUDGEMENT PRESIDENT
NIXON WOULD DO NOTHING INTENTIONALLY THAT WOULD DAMAGE THE NATIONAL
SECURITY. I RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE OUR DOMESTIC TURMOILS,
BUT I THINK THAT EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT PRESIDENT NIXON IS A
VISCERAL, INSTINCTIVE PATRIOT AND HIS ENTIRE HISTORY BEARS
WITNESS TO THAT INSTINCTIVE PATRIOTISM. HE HAS NOT CHANGED
IN THAT REGARD. AS I OBSERVED EARLIER, ONE SHOULD WAIT FOR
THE RESULTS OF THIS MEETING BEFORE ONE LEAPS TO ANY CONCLUSIONS.

Q: MAY I FOLLOW UP ON THAT STATEMENT? YOU SAID I DON'T THINK
THAT THE KIND OF ACTIONS YOU DESCRIBE WOULD STRENGTHEN HIS HAND.
I TAKE IT YOU HOLD TO THE VIEW THAT ONLY BY TAKING A HARD LINE
IN MOSCOW WOULD HELP THE PRESIDENT INsofar AS IMPEACHMENT POLITICS
ARE CONCERNED BECAUSE THIS WOULD PLEASE THE CONSERVATIVES
ON CAPITOL HILL?

A: NO, THAT WAS NOT MY INTENTION. I THINK THAT THE PRESIDENT
WILL BE BACKED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN ANY REASONABLE AGREEMENT.
WHAT I INFERRED FROM THE PRIOR QUESTION WAS THE POSSIBILITY THAT
THE PRESIDENT IN PURSUIT OF AN AGREEMENT MIGHT ACCEPT AN
UNREASONABLE AGREEMENT. I DON'T THINK THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS
ANY INTENTION OF DOING SO IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND IN THE SECOND
PLACE, THAT THAT WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO HIM.

Q: BECAUSE OF THE CONSERVATIVES ON CAPITOL HILL?

A: I THINK THAT IT SHOULD BE PUT IN TERMS OF THE OVERALL JUDGMENT
OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC. THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WOULD LIKE TO
HAVE PROGRESS IN MAINTAINING RELAXED RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET
UNION BUT THEY WANT TO BE SURE THAT THERE IS A BALANCE IN THOSE
RELATIONSHIPS AND I THINK THAT THE PRESIDENT STRONGLY SUPPORTS
THAT POSITION.

END TEXT

WARM REGARDS.

BT

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